It may be only part of a total project at a cost of about rupees one point some crores. But we are going to include more projects. The Government has decided to open more projects, which I will announce day after tomorrow.

African Cultural Festival held in Delhi

*203. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an African Cultural Festival was held in Delhi recently;

(b) if so, what are the details of the African countries represented in that Festival and the details of the programme shown there;

(c) whether it is proposed to organise such Festivals in other parts of the country also; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, from 25th to 28th May, 1987.

(b) Six African counties were represented at the Festival. They were Senegal, Ghana, Ethopia, Mauritius, Nigeria and Burkina Faso. The details of the programme shown are:

(i) 15-member Sira Badral National Ballet of Senegal presented item highlighting ritual and traditional items.

(ii) 10-member Ghana Dance Ensemble had a repertaoire based on ceremonial events in Africa.

(iii) A 9-member cultural troupe from Ethiopia presented folk dances accompanied by traditional musical instruments.

(iv) A 10-member Mo-Mam-Twa group form Mauritius presented traditional saga, modern interpretation and African Music.

(v) The 6-member cultural troupe from Burkina Faso presented percussion items alongwith song and dance.

(vi) A 4-member group form Nigeria led by Ms. Oneyka Onwenu sand songs in English and Ebo.

(vii) A 16-member group of siddhis of African Origin from Gujarat also presented items at the Festival.

(c) and (d) Such festivals have already been organised in other parts of the country. The African Festival was held in Calcutta from 29th to 31st May, in Bangalore on 2nd and 3rd June and in Bombay from 5th to 7th June, 1987.

SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Madam, Africa is having its own very peculiar culture. African cultural events are very interesting. But those events are not very much known to other parts of the world I am happy that such festivals have already been organised in Calcutta, Bangalore and in Bombay. I am sure if such festivals are organised people will get an opportunity to understand the African culture and social life better and can appreciate their music and dances. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister who are the organisers of this Festival and what is India's contribution in organising this festival.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Madam Deputy Chairman, I appreciate the feelings expressed by the hon. Member, which, I am sure, are the feelings of the Parliament as a whole and the Government follows the same direction and the same perspective as the Hon. Member has outlined, namely, that we must give greater encouragement to cultural events of countries other than the western countries, which we have conceptualised in the last 100 years as the only universal culture, which is not correct. Now, Madam, this festival was organised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations from our Ministry

SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: I would like to know whether this festival was organised to raise funds for Africa. What is the collection out of this festival and in what way these funds will be utilised? Secondly, what feelings were expressed by the African artistes participating in this tour about the Indian culture and Indian social life?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Actually we could not get plus income out of this festival. The expenditure was more than the income. It did not balance out. It was not very high compared to other cultural events that we hold. We do not have, at the moment, the exact figure of the income. However, I would like to say that all the events were shown on paid tickets. We had full house everywhere, not merely in the capital city as I said, but even in some rural areas also near Delhi, like Rohtak, Bhiwandi, and so on . Even stadia like Netaji Stadium in Calcutta and Siri Fort in Delhi were all packed to capacity; about 40,000 people attended these events.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Madam, the idea that African culture should be made available to the people of India, is a good idea. I would only like to know whether there is any proposal to change the structure of these festivals and take them to rural areas. We would not be satisfied only if these festivals are held in Delhi, Bangalore or Calcutta. Is there any proposal to take them to rural areas so that people in rural areas will also have a glimpse into the culture of Africa.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Yes, as I said, on this issue we think on the same lines as Parliament as a whole, and this is one more example of this festival that we had recently. We took the troupes to some of the rural areas, like Bhiwandi, Mathura, Rohtak, Sonepat and Gurgaon. As and when we have such events in future, finances permitting, surely we would keep this in mind and take troupes to rural areas.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jaswant Singh.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I have changed my mind about asking supplementary.

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA: Apart from support from the Department of Culture—financial support and otherwise—who arganised these functions, I want to know whether support and coordination was maintained with Indo-African Friendship Society, in order to give it a wider exposure, and also whether those countries from Africa which were not represented in this festival, would be represented in further festivals and whether an effort is being made in that direction.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: We have now constituted an advisory council, or a panel for Africa within the scope of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations, and it was under the aegis and supervision and with the suggestions of this advisory panel that the festival was held. We welcome the cooperation with the friendship societies involved in strengthening Indo-African friendship and cooperation and we will be delighted and will be grateful if they take more interest in the matter.

DR. G. VIJAY MOHAN REDDY: Madam, African continent has the greatest civilisation in the world, and it is the suffering of this African continent which put the industrial revolution of Europe on its wheels. It is such a great civilisation; it is such a great continint where they lost more than 50 per cent of the population. I want to know whether this suffering would be properly made known to our rural masses and to our other States, so that a resurgence can come about as was comprehended by our great Mahatma Gandhi. Will these cultural festivals be taken to all the States so that all areas are properly covered?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: I may mention here that DAVP at our request organised a photo exhibition and an exhibition of paintings, including the paintings done by school children of some schools in Delhi. The exhibition is ready. We have already taken it to some areas outside Delhi. If I may mention, I have taken it to my own constituency. We welcome State Governments asking us to have this exhibition in their States. We will liaise with the Information Ministry and do the needful in the matter.

DR. G. VIJAY MOHAN REDDY: I would like to know whether the aspect of the African people's struggle will be reflected properly in the exhibition.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Yes. We will do all necessary things in this matter.

SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY: Madam, when this festival was being held in Delhi, the most interesting item which was actually presented on that occasion was not by the Africans. I am very candid in saying it here. It was actually presented by Siddis, a community from Gujarat which came to India thousands of years ago from Abyssinia. They have become Indians. They speak Gujarati, but they have not lost their cultural tradition They were actually brought here to give their traditional performance on that occasion which received tremendous ovation and appreciation from the audience which witnessed it. In view of this, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many people of this kind have come from different parts of the world, settled down in India, become Indians but have not lost their culture and tradition and whether the Government will give encouragement to them so that their culture and tradition is kept alive.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Madam, it is true that this group is there. It is a very good thing. It shows the nature of this country with diverse cultures which are very valuable. We, however, do not propose to have a survey as to how many people are there because a citizen of this country is a citizen of this country and this is what matters.

Acation taken on the suggestions of the Sub-Committee on Handloom Development Schemes

*204. SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE:†
DR. R. K. PODDAR:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Sub-Committee on restructuring of handloom development schemes and programmes has submitted its suggestions to Government;

(b) if so, when did it submit its suggestions and what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what action Government have taken on the suggestions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) No, Madam.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: Madam, here is a Press clipping with me dated 19-6-87 which says that the sub-committee on restructuring of handloom development schemes and programmes has submitted its recommendations to the Government. But I am astonished to see here that the Government says that they have not received the recommendations. Anyway, whether they have received the recommendations or not, it appears, Government intends to undertake some welfare measures for the handloom weavers. Madam, the weavers

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Kanak Mukherjee.